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THE EQUALIZATION OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION INTO THE DIFFERENT COURSES LEAD- ING TO THE FIRST COLLEGIATE DEGREE.

The scheme of studies which includes three or four years of instruction in Latin and two or three in Greek, together with the amount of mathematics, English, and history, which can be conveniently taught in connection therewith, may be accepted as the standard curriculum for preparatory and high schools, measured from the cultural point of view. The average student who has advanced through this course year by year to the close has attained to a degree of maturity, and has acquired a stock of information and habits of thought and study such that he may reasonably be subjected to college tasks and methods and exposed to the freedom of college life. This association has, during the past few years, been giving special thought to devising a plan adapted to the limitations of southern schools, by which those students who do not study Greek, and perhaps omit Latin also, should be advanced by like stages through a parallel course of equal, or approximately equal, cultural value. All are agreed, it would seem, upon the wisdom and necessity of inaugurating such a curriculum in the preparatory schools, but if it is to be expected of the schools that they shall bring all their pupils up to the same degree of culture, whether by the classical or the non-classical route, then the colleges should adjust their requirements for admission so that they will be equal for all the various courses, and the same as the requirements for graduation from the preparatory schools. Any other course would tend to the disorganization of the very system of preparatory school work which the colleges as well as the schools of this association have received with approval.

While it is very true that the requirements for the admission of candidates for a degree differ very considerably from institution to institution, that is not the point at issue here and now. Such differences can be entirely eliminated from this paper without affecting the present discussion, and the impulse to equalize them may be dismissed with no other ceremony than the expression of good wishes for its success. We are directly concerned with the different requirements for admission into the different courses leading to a degree in one and

the same college. A study of the catalogues of southern institutions shows a situation which may be thus briefly summed up: In thirty-eight colleges offering ninety-two separate courses leading to a degree, and distinguished from each other by differences in the requirements for admission, thirty-eight include Latin and Greek; ten omit both without any substitute whatever; nineteen omit Greek (or one ancient language) without any substitute; twelve retaining the Latin require a substitution for the omitted Greek; and thirteen require a more or less adequate substitution of other subjects for both Latin and Greek. A comparison of the catalogues of several recent years yields evidence of a conscious movement towards the equalization of these different requirements in some of the most representative colleges. This is a tendency which richly deserves to be encouraged and promoted, and it is the purpose of this paper to review some of the reasons for it, in order, if possible, to stimulate a more general interest in it. The old policy of unequal requirements is a short-sighted one for the colleges to pursue; and one which is also deleterious to the schools; while the new policy will help both and is thoroughly consistent with, indeed is even a necessary complement to, the purposes and past efforts of this association.

The old policy is a short-sighted one for the colleges to pursue. When a man has entered college after satisfying low requirements for admission, and has taken a relatively light course because of the excessive number of beginner's classes in it (being, however, the only ones for which he is prepared) and finally graduates with the degree which is offered for such a course, he is thereby certified publicly and forever to be a man who has had less than the maximum advantages at college. In individual cases the stigma, for such it is, however slight, may be unwarranted. One man may make better use of inferior advantages than others will make of superior opportunities. But there is justification for it on the face of the facts, and it is notorious that it generally attaches. The writer has had to contend against it in dealing with students whom, not from lack of previous training but from consideration of their tastes and aptitudes, it seemed wise to guide into a scientific course. Surely a college is short-sighted which causes that some of its alumni shall look down upon others and that these others shall have occasion for shame before their brothers and the public at large. The policy involved actually presents a motive to those who really have most need of the college training to abandon half-used the opportunities for an education which they have.

It is sometimes said by the colleges in justification of their course that it is followed from the noblest motives and the highest consideration of public welfare. There are ambitious and capable young men with such poor local educational advantages that their natures will be dwarfed and the public be deprived of their best services unless the college shall open its opportunities to them, poorly equipped as they are to enter. Such cases may at one time have been more frequent than they are now. There still may be individual cases which seem deserving of some concession. But it is not the past and the individual case; it is rather the future and the general policy which commands our consideration in this connection. Is it the function of the college to hold itself ready to supplement poor local school systems, wherever they may appear; or is it not rather its function to pursue such a policy as will foster good schools everywhere? But these two policies are mutually contradictory. One must be adopted and the other will be opposed. Now, if the argument in favor of the former is good for anything at all it would lead the colleges to offer beginner's Latin and especially beginner's Greek. But that point has already been fought and won. The premise on which this paper is based is the established fact that enforceable and actually enforced requirements for admission into the classical course are higher than those for entrance into the scientific course; and further, it is the determined policy of this association to exert every possible pressure upon the schools for their improvement. Now where there are already considerable and growing facilities for acquiring a preparatory-school training in the classical course, it cannot be from lack of schools, but merely from lack of broad equipment that the deficient preparatory training for the scientific course arises. This brings us back to the alternative stated a moment ago. Either the colleges must use their resources in doing the work of the schools, or bring such pressure to bear upon the schools and the constituency which supports them that they will do it themselves. The college that pursues the one policy will surely win the lasting gratitude of some deserving individuals, and may make a specific contribution to the public service. But the other policy is feasible, is consistent with and an essential complement of the policy already adopted toward the preparatory classical course; and the college which follows it will leave the lower field to parties who are capable of exploiting it fully and will have its resources free for seeking equal honors in its own peculiar fields.

Financial necessity and the necessity of making an imposing exhibit before the state legislature or the denomination is the secret motive which impels many colleges to strive for numbers even at the sacrifice of scholarship. But here, too, a short-sighted policy is set over against a broad, far-sighted one. Shall the college get its students wherever it can, with little regard to their state of preparation or the ultimate consequences of its policy? or shall it by fostering the preparatory schools at once raise the grade of candidates for admission and increase their numbers? Whatever moral courage it may take to make the choice and bear the temporary sacrifice, it is plain what reason dictates. Surely, no one can show that good preparatory schools have had the tendency to decrease the number of students who go away to college. Indeed, the plain fact of observation is that the number of college students has been rapidly increasing in the region of our country where the best preparatory schools abound; and it would take a great deal of temerity to argue that the increase had taken place in spite of the influence of the schools; for the very atmosphere of the preparatory school, manned as it is by teachers who are themselves college graduates, is calculated to develop ambitions in this direction. Whatever some people in the South may have to say against the policy of free public high schools with first-class equipment, it is not for the college man to object to them. It is for his interest to encourage them.

But if the policy is short-sighted from the standpoint of the college, it is deleterious to the interests of the school; and the schoolmen have reason to be active in opposing it. This point needs no elaboration. It would require merely a restatement from the schoolman's point of view of many of the arguments just made; and more than likely that has already been done by most of us mentally in passing. If the college enters any portion of the field which belongs to the preparatory school, in just so far it diminishes the strength of public sentiment which is interested in the school and robs it of its sustaining patronage and financial support.

But it is especially and peculiarly in the difficult problem of properly grading the preparatory-school work that the lower requirements for admission into certain college courses affect the schools harmfully. If some pupils are pursuing Latin and Greek and the other subjects commonly associated with them, while other pupils omit one or both of these studies, it is very important that the latter class of pupils should have some substitute for the omitted work. If they do not,

they will waste their time and, what is worse, learn habits of idleness, a result which no honest teacher can contemplate. One method of supplying the deficiency may be found in advancing the pupils more rapidly in the fewer subjects which they are studying. This will necessitate the organization of new classes and an increase in equipment and teaching force, and, besides, it will result in shortening and narrowing the course and in making the pupils ready for the subjects concerned at a relatively immature age. However much the pupil may welcome this, and however much the college may invite it by low terms of admission, it is not the course which the schoolmaster, apart from any material or personal considerations, will plan for the best welfare of his pupils. Another method is to add new subjects or pursue the old ones further until an equivalent is provided for the omitted subjects. It will require no increase of teaching force and equipment over the previous plan. It is the plan which appeals to the schoolmen as the one eminently wise; and it is the one which has met the approval of this association as it was presented in the report of the Committee on Program of Studies for Preparatory Schools two years ago. Such influence as the individual college possesses—and on the schools which are its feeders its influence is a vital force—will be exerted against the best interests of the school and its pupils if it maintains a low standard of admission to any of its courses, while its influence will be uplifting if it adjusts its requirements for admission to the work which a preparatory school can do with a model curriculum.

If there has been any truth in what has been said and any virtue in the manner of its presentation, the propriety, the timeliness, and the importance of discussing the question in the presence of this association must be apparent. The purpose of this association to unify and develop the system of higher education in the South is a great and noble one. Encouraging progress has been made in several directions. Of late the association has been much occupied with the question of equalizing the amount of work required for the various college degrees, on the one hand, and, on the other, with the problem of broadening the preparatory-school curriculum. But the desired results in both of these directions will be jeopardized if the requirements for admission into the different courses of the same college are unequal. It is hoped that the question presented briefly in this paper will meet with the consideration which its intrinsic and strategical importance merits.

NOTE.—In the colleges named below the maximum requirements for admission to any course leading to a degree are those in the course including both Greek and Latin :

Alabama, University of	North Carolina, Trinity
Arkansas, Hendrix College	Wake Forest
Georgia, Emory	South Carolina College
University of	Wofford
Mercer	
Kentucky, Central	Tennessee, Cumberland
Centre	Grant University
University	University of the South
Wesleyan	Southwestern Baptist
Louisiana, Centenary	Southwestern Presbyterian
Tulane	University of
Mississippi, Millsaps	Vanderbilt
University of	Texas, Baylor
Missouri, Central	University of
Drury	Southwestern University
University of	Virginia, Emory and Henry
Washington	Hampden-Sidney
William Jewel	Randolph-Macon
North Carolina, University of	Randolph-Macon, Woman's College
	West Virginia, University of =38

Of these colleges the following offer a course leading to a bachelor's degree in arts, science, or letters, which may be entered upon without preparation in Greek or Latin, or any substitute for them :

Alabama, University of	South Carolina College
Georgia, Emory	Tennessee, Cumberland
Kentucky, Central	Southwestern Baptist
Mississippi, Millsaps	Southwestern Presbyterian
University of	Texas, University of (now changed) =10

Of these same colleges the following offer another course leading to a degree, which requires preparation in Latin, but which may be entered upon without Greek or any substitute for it :

Alabama, University of	Missouri, William Jewel
Arkansas, Hendrix College	North Carolina, Wake Forest
Georgia, Emory	Tennessee, University of the South
University of	Southwestern Presbyterian
Mercer	University of
Kentucky, Central	Texas, University of (changed)
Centre	Virginia, Hampden-Sidney
Missouri, Central	Randolph-Macon
Drury	South Carolina College
Washington	

The following offer a course leading to a degree which may be entered upon without Greek, but with an adequate substitute :

Kentucky, University (one year each of German and French).

Wesleyan (one year of German for one year of Greek).

Louisiana, Centenary (at least one year each in German and French, for two years in Greek).

Tulane (United States history and ancient history for two years of Greek).

Missouri, University of (one year in history and one in science for one and one half in Greek).

North Carolina, University of (for one ancient language, two years of one modern language or one of physics).

Trinity (one year in one modern language for one and one half year in Greek).

South Carolina, Wofford (one year of German for one year of Greek).

Tennessee, Grant University (two years of German for two years of Greek).

Vanderbilt (two years of one modern language for two to two and one half of Greek. Beginning with 1903 two years in physical geography or will be added).

Texas, Baylor (solid geometry and one year of modern language for two years of Greek).

Virginia, Randolph-Macon Woman's College (the equivalent of one college year in French or German for Greek).=12.

The following offer a course leading to a degree which may be entered upon without preparation in Greek and Latin, but with a more or less adequate substitute for them :

Arkansas, Hendrix (physiology).

Georgia, University of (one year of German for two years in Greek and Latin).

Kentucky University (100 pages each of easy French and German).

Louisiana, Tulane (two years of one modern language and United States history and ancient history for four years of Latin and two years of Greek).

Mississippi, Millsaps (political and physical geography and American history).

Missouri, University of (one year of history, two years of a modern language, and two of science for three of Latin and about two of Greek).

North Carolina, University of (two years of one modern language and one of physics for three and one half of Latin and one and one half of Greek).

Tennessee, University of (advanced algebra or solid geometry and some subject amounting to one year's work in United States history, physics, botany, modern language, etc., in place of Latin and Greek).

Vanderbilt (two years in one modern language and physical geography and one from the following : elementary Latin, a second modern language, or science, or history, to go into effect in 1903-4).

Texas, University of (beginning with September next, a given number of points will be required; but in the valuation of subjects Latin has perhaps been undervalued).

Southwestern University (two modern languages for two years of Latin and one of Greek).

Virginia, Emory and Henry (one year each of French and German for two years of Latin and one of Greek).

West Virginia, University of (out of 77 courses arranged in groups 39 are required).=13.

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